

AMERICORPS FUNDING CRISIS – BULLETIN #1, JUNE 18, 2003

SEVERE CUTS HITTING AMERICORPS

This week the Michigan Community Service Commission received word that Michigan's AmeriCorps programs will be cut 85 percent beginning September 1, 2003. As a result,

- The number of Michigan residents served by AmeriCorps members will decrease from 115,000 to 17,250.
- The funding communities receive will decline from \$6.2 million to about \$900,000.
- The number of members serving in Michigan's communities will go from 700 to 100.
- The number of volunteers recruited by AmeriCorps members to help meet community needs will decline from more than 19,000 to approximately 2,900.
- The number of programs will be cut from 24 to nine – and the size of the nine remaining programs will be greatly reduced.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Three issues are impacting Michigan's AmeriCorps programs:

1. Michigan's AmeriCorps program funding is being cut from \$6.2 million to \$900,000.
2. The balance in the Education Award Trust will not support President Bush's call for 75,000 members.
3. A cap has been placed on the number of AmeriCorps members who can enroll nationwide.

These issues are a result of accountability gaps on the part of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that oversees AmeriCorps funding, and the subsequent response of the U.S. Congress.

THE NATIONAL NEWS

- The Corporation for National and Community Service announced the funding cuts on June 16, 2003. The cuts touch all states and range from 50-90 percent.
- Forty-Six U.S. Senators sent a letter to President Bush on Monday, June 16, 2003 asking him to request additional funding for AmeriCorps through a supplemental appropriations bill. Michigan's Senators Levin and Stabenow signed the letter.
- Senators Bond (R-MO) and Mikulski (D-MD) introduced Bill S1276 that begins addressing the CNCS's accountability gaps that led to the sharp decrease in AmeriCorps funding. However, the Bill does not address the immediate AmeriCorps funding crisis. The bill passed the Senate on Thursday, June 19, 2003. To view the Bill S1276 visit <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>
- National media have been covering the story. Below you will find media outlets covering the story and links to their coverage.

The New York Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/18/opinion/18WED1.html>

Fox News Channel

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,89635,00.html>

Other related stories: Senators Kennedy (D-MA), McCain (R-AZ), Bayh (R-MO), Mikulski (D-MD), and Rockefeller (D-WV) introduced Bill S7983 to reauthorize future AmeriCorps funding. This bill will not impact the current AmeriCorps funding crisis. The text of S7983 is not yet available for viewing electronically. For future information, check <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>.

THE STATEWIDE NEWS

- The Michigan Public Policy Institute, a program of the Michigan Nonprofit Association, is tracking the issue. For more information on the public policy ramifications, contact Erin Skene at skeneeri@mnaonline.org.
- The Michigan media has also been covering the issue. Below you will find Michigan media outlets covering the story and links to their coverage.

Detroit News (two different articles)

<http://www.detnews.com/2003/metro/0306/18/a01-196680.htm>

<http://www.detnews.com/2003/metro/0306/18/e01-196413.htm>

Lansing State Journal

http://www.lsj.com/news/local/030618_ameri corps_1b-2b.html

The Associated Press (mlive.com)

<http://www.mlive.com/printer/printer.ssf?/base/news-3/1055870945175800.xml?aponline>

WNEM TV-5 Saginaw

<http://www.wnem.com/global/story.asp?s=1324985>

WLNS Newscenter 6 Lansing

<http://www.wlns.com/global/story.asp?s=1325979>

The Local Stories

Are you concerned about the AmeriCorps funding cuts? Please tell us your story. Send an email message to MCSC-News@michigan.gov.